

757
PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

OHIO STATE CHRISTIAN

Anti-Slavery Convention,

HELD AT COLUMBUS,

AUGUST 10 AND 11,

1859.

CHRISTIAN

Anti-Slavery Convention.

Pursuant to previous notice, a Christian Anti-Slavery Convention met at ten o'clock in the morning on Wednesday, August 10, 1859, at the Congregational Church in the city of Columbus, Ohio.

A preliminary organization was effected by electing A. A. GUTHRIE, Esq. of Putnam, Chairman, and H. B. Spelman, of Cleveland, Secretary.

The call under which the Convention assembled was read as follows:

STATE CHRISTIAN ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION,

To be held in Columbus, O., Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 10 and 11, 1859.

TO ANTI-SLAVERY CHRISTIANS THROUGHOUT THE STATE:—

The present aspects of the great controversy between Freedom and Slavery in our country, earnestly call for more thorough aggression and systematic action on our part.

The African Slave Trade—which by the law is piracy—is revived, and there is not sufficient active moral power in the nation to extinguish it.

Southern Churches have generally apostatized to the open justification of Slavery, and Northern Christians are sadly remiss in duty with respect to opposing it.

Southern States are expelling or enslaving their free colored population, and Northern States allow their colored citizens to be kidnapped under the provisions of the Fugitive Act.

The Fugitive Act is pronounced Constitutional by the National Courts. Some of our most virtuous and respected citizens are imprisoned because they could not quietly stand and see a neighbor kidnapped and dragged into hopeless bondage, and our State Supreme Court, in deference to precedent, has refused to pronounce the law unconstitutional.

According to the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, Slavery is extended to all our territories by virtue of the Constitution, and neither Congress nor the people has power to prohibit it. And while all this is passing, the party in power is straining its energies to acquire new territory for the expansion and development of the great evil.

To meet the demands and aggressions of the Slaveholding power, the Freedom loving element of the nation has no great, Christian, earnest, systematic agency.

Alarmed at these facts, the undersigned invite Christians of all denomina-

tions who believe and deeply feel that Slavery is our nation's great crime, (and her great calamity, and the source of her greatest danger as well,) to meet in Columbus, on Wednesday and Thursday, August 10 and 11, to deliberate and pray, to give public expression to our views, and to organize a system of efforts which shall aid in enlightening and arousing the public conscience and enlisting the Christian energies of the State and Nation against this great iniquity.

Let there be a great, earnest, prayerful, and calm, but determined Convention.

Unless the Convention shall otherwise direct, the forenoon of Wednesday will be spent in prayer, the afternoon and evening in addresses, and Thursday in the transaction of business.

J. B. Walker, Pastor Congregational Church, *Sandusky City*. A. D. Barber, Pastor Congregational Church, Henry R. Smith, J. C. White, Pastor Plymouth Con. Church, J. A. Thome, Pastor Con. Church, *West Side*, W. H. Brewster, Pastor Wes. Meth. Church, J. A. Gale, John Pete, Pastor St. Clair Street Meth. Ch., E. P. Ingersoll, G. N. Abbey, I. C. Pendleton, Joseph Perkins, H. B. Spelman, Otis Boise, B. Barker, B. Pelton, R. F. Humiston, *Cleveland*; H. M. Storrs, Pastor of Con. Church, Simeon B. Williams, Esq., *Cincinnati*; S. C. Leonard, Pastor Con. Church, Geo. Clatcey, Pastor M. P. Church, Joseph Wolfe, Pastor M. E. Church, William Turner, William H. Cochran, I. W. Vance, *Mt. Vernon, O*; John Rankin, Pastor 2d Pres. Ch., D. Gould, Pastor 1st Pres. Ch., J. S. Peregrine, Pastor, M. E. Ch., and 35 others, *Ropley, Brown Co*; T. S. Clarke, Pastor Con. Church, Hon. E. N. Sill, and 43 others, *Cuyahoga Falls*; S. Plumb, James Monroe, E. H. Fairchild, John Keep, John Morgan, J. H. Fairchild, H. E. Peck, *Oberlin*; Rev. A. D. Olds, J. R. Giddings, H. A. Plumb, and others, *Jefferson*; Rev. Charles Smith, Clement Wright, and others, *Tallmadge*; Rev. E. Thompson, Rev. O. W. White, and others, *Strongsville*; David Wright, J. M. Elinwood, and others, *Morgan*; A. Dresser, Pastor Cong. Church, *Orwell*; F. L. Arnold, Pastor Cong. Church, C. W. Von Coelin, Prof. of Math. &c, Greensburg, Seminary, *Rome*; Jacob Tuckerman, Prof. Mathematics, Farmer's College, *Cin.*; S. H. Prentice, Pastor Con. Church, G. B. Penfield, Freeman Penfield, *Penfield*; T. E. Monroe, Pastor Con. Church, B. Clough, *Amherst, Lorain Co.*; A. E. Baldwin, Pastor of Cong. Church, S. Williams, Pastor Baptist Church, Edward Meyer, Rector of St. Paul's Church, J. S. Carpenter, and others, J. P. Converse, A. R. Baldwin, A. C. Waters, J. M. Frazer, Pastor of Cong. Church, *Akron*; J. W. Walter, Pastor of Church, J. W. Vance, *Milay*; G. W. Brainard, U. H. Hunt, and others, *East Orange*; J. Gabler, Pastor of M. E. Church, (German) R. Crozier, Pastor M. E. Church, *Ropley, Brown Co.*

The following Committees were then appointed, namely :

On Resolutions—W. G. Finney, Rev. J. A. Thome, Rev. J. N. McAbee, Hon. J. R. Giddings, Rev. J. S. McReady, Rev. Adam Crooks, Hon. J. S. Carpenter, Rev. J. A. Pinney, Rev. W. H. Brewster, Rev. John Rankin and Rev. John Boggs.

On Permanent Organization—Rev. W. B. Watkins, Rev. Henry Cowles, Rev. W. H. Brewster, L. L. Rice and Rev. David Craig.

On Address—Rev. H. E. Peck, Rev. John G. Fee, Hon. J. R. Giddings, M. B. Bateman, Esq., Rev. Simeon Brown, A. A. Guthrie, Esq. and Rev. John Lawrence.

The following names were entered on the roll :

Rev. H. G. Marsh, Elder of Chagrin Falls, Wesleyan Circuit, Solon, Cuya-

hoga Co. Rev. Allen Medlin, delegate of the Cleveland Christian Union, Cleveland. William Turner, of Congregational Church, Mt. Vernon. Rev. Gideon Dana, David Pettit, Congregational Church, Bucyrus. Wm. G. Finney, Cadiz. John H. Jones, Congregational Church, Columbus. Rev. W. H. Brewster, Pastor Wesleyan Church, Cleveland. Rev. J. A. Thome, Pastor Congregational Church, Cleveland. Hon. J. S. Carpenter, Congregational Church, Akron. Rev. Wm. Dempsey, Congregational Church Middlebury. E. Corner, Congregational Church, Columbus. Rev. E. H. Fairchild, Congregational Church, Oberlin. A. M. Gangewer, Columbus. J. B. Mallett, Germantown, Ky. F. A. B. Simkins, B. Tresenrider, S. E. Samuel, O. C. Humphrey, E. D. Phillips, Columbus. A. G. Humphrey, Lancaster. C. H. Dunbar, J. S. Fisk, Brecksville, Cuyahoga Co. Rev. D. A. Randall, Baptist Church, Columbus. Rev. J. S. McCready, United Presbyterian Church, Cadiz. Rev. David Craig, Free Presbyterian Church, New Athens. Samuel Patterson, Wesley Church, Orange, Delaware Co. Doct. T. S. Towler, M. E. Church, Columbus. Rev. S. Cole, Congregational Church, Weymouth, Medina Co. Rev. George H. Barnum, Wesleyan Church, East Orange. G. Fairchild, Congregational Church, Brownhelm. J. M. Scott, Wesleyan Church, Alexandria, Licking Co. Wm. Sewell, Wesleyan Church, Barnes, Richland county. Rev. John Keep, Congregational Church, Oberlin. Rev. Geo. Gordon, Free Presbyterian, Iberia. Rev. Davis R. Barker, Congregational Church, Mercer, Penn. R. McFarland, Barnes, Richland county. A. A. Bancroft, Congregational, Granville. G. R. Hatmany, Congregational Church, Germantown, Ky. F. Follett, Congregational Church, Alexandria. Rev. Jacob Emrich, Middletown, Butler county. C. W. Telford, Piqua, Miami county. Asa Cady, Theodore F. Merriman, Ezekiel Adams, Collamer. T. J. Thomas, Granville. M. B. Batcham, Mrs. Josephine C. Batcham, Mrs. Harriet P. Osgood, Columbus. Rev. W. Tillis, Free Baptist, Lafayette, Medina county. Rev. John G. Fee, Congregational, Berea, Madison county, Ky. Leman Mead, Pataskala, Licking county. Rev. Wm. Perkins, editor *Christian Leader*, Cincinnati. Rev. J. Hunt, Free Presbyterian Church, Delaware county. Rev. I. N. McAbee, M. E. Church, Pittsburgh Conference; Washington, Guernsey county, O. D. Sinsabaugh, M. E. Church, Norwich, Muskingum county. Rev. Heman Geor, Congregational Church, Wayne, Ashabula county. Rev. L. B. Beach, Andover, Ashtabula county, Congregational Church. Rev. S. D. Smith, Morrow. Rev. A. D. Barber, Congregational, East Cleveland. Rev. W. B. Watkins, M. E. Church, Cambridge, Guernsey county. Brewster Pelton, Cleveland. Rev. A. N. Hamlin, Wesleyan Methodist, Delaware county. Hon. J. R. Giddings, Jefferson. Rev. Henry Cowles, Congregational, Oberlin. D. Dennison, Cleveland. Rev. A. Crooks, Alexandria, Licking county. J. L. Burrill, Oberlin. Rev. H. H. George, Reformed Presbyterian, Dr. G. L. Weed, Cincinnati. Thomas Norton, Georgesville. E. W. Brady, M. E. Winchester, O. Rev. J. Rankin, Second Presbyterian, Ripley. Rev. S. D. Bates, Free Will Baptist, Marion. Rev. J. M. Williams, Wesleyan Methodist, Michigan Conference. T. E. L.

land, D. M. Curtis, W. McGregor, G. Baer, Mary Falkerth, Mr. Falkerth, Rebecca Falkerth, Jane McGregor, L. G. Curtis, Robert Anderson, H. P. Conant, E. C. Conant, Dayton. John V. McCullough, Sharon. Rev. Smeon Brown, Cincinnati. John M. Carey, Washington county. A. A. Guthrie, Presbyterian, Putnam. L. L. Rice, Columbus. H. B. Spelman, Cleveland, C. P. Atkinson, Elm Grove, Brooke county, Va. Rev. R. Burgess, Free Presbyterian, West Alexander, Washington county, Pa. H. L. Simpson, Cincinnati. Rev. D. L. Travis, Wesleyan, Mt. Vernon. Philip Ashton, Mt. Vernon. Rev. John Lawrence, editor of *Religious Telescope*, Rev. D. K. Flickinger, United Brethren, Dayton. Rev. Joel Thrapp, Methodist Protestant, Mt. Pleasant. Rev. John Boggs, Disciples', editor of *Christian Luminary*, Rev. Wallace Shelton, Zion Baptist, Cincinnati. T. Tresize, Pataskala. Rev. S. T. Boyd, Free Presbyterian, Iberia. J. B. Hunt, Wesleyan, East Orange, Delaware county. Rev. J. M. Fraser, Congregational, Parkman, Geauga co. Rev. A. D. Olds, Congregational, Jefferson, Ashtabula county. Rev. E. Gale, Congregational, Geneva, Ashtabula county. Rev. A. Pinney, Baptist, Zanesville. Rev. A. T. Rankin, Free Presbyterian, Ripley, O. Mrs. Amanda Wallace, Miss Mary Wallace, Baltimore, Md. Charles French, Cleveland, West Side. Prof. H. E. Peck, Oberlin. Prof. John Haywood, United Brethren, Westerville. W. H. Cochran, Mt. Vernon. W. E. Lincoln, Oberlin. O. Nichols, Pataskala, Licking county. Benoni Dickerman, Constantia, Delaware county. Peabody Atkinson, Pataskala. J. C. Wetmore, Columbus. J. H. Paddock, Elyria. R. S. McFarland, Baines, Richland county.

The remainder of the morning session was taken up with religious services, singing, prayer, informal speaking, etc.

Prof. Peck, alluding to the remark of the chairman, that the leading feature of the new anti-slavery movement was prayer, said that his own experience in the past few months led him to think the remark justified. In a very extensive correspondence, he had frequently noted the fact that a great work of prayer was going on in the church of this country in regard to slavery. He is quite sure that the church was assuming a new position. The ballot box was a great means of good; but there was an appeal superior to the ballot box—a more powerful means—prayer.

Rev. John Keep compared the present Convention with one he had attended in Columbus in the infancy of the anti-slavery movement, and found great encouragement in the difference.

Several gentlemen spoke briefly—usually to the effect that this Convention marked a new era in the anti-slavery cause, and taking Prof. Peck's view of the matter.

The Convention then took a recess until 2 o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Committee on Permanent Organization reported as follows through Rev. W. B. Watkins:—

President—AUSTIN A. GUTHRIE, of Putnam.

Vice Presidents—Hon. J. R. Giddings, of Ashtabula; Rev. John Rankin, of Ripley; David Sinsabaugh, Norwich; Hon. J. S. Carpenter, Akron; Rev. A. Crooks, Alexandria; Rev. John G. Fee, Berea, Kentucky; Rev. George Clancey, Mt. Vernon; Rev. S. McCready, Cadiz; Rev. D. A. Randall, Columbus; Rev. John Boggs, Cincinnati.

Secretaries—H. B. Spelman, Cleveland, and Rev. W. B. Watkins, Cambridge.

The report was unanimously adopted and the officers took their seats.

Mr. Guthrie, on taking the chair as permanent President addressed the Convention as follows:

Gentlemen of the Convention:

For this expression of your confidence and respect I thank you. I could readily excuse myself from accepting the position with which you honor me, on the score of inexperience in the duties which attach to it, and I am quite sure that you have in the Convention older and abler men; but I have made it a rule of my life to shrink from no proper responsibility which my friends may choose to lay upon me and never to apologize for not doing *well* that which is done according to the best of my abilities.

Custom will warrant, if it does not demand, that I should address some remarks to the Convention on taking the chair as its presiding officer.

Gentlemen, I am somewhat familiar with the history of the Anti-Slavery cause.

The first State Anti-Slavery Convention in Ohio was held in the town where I reside, nearly twenty-five years ago, and from that time to this, I have watched its onward progress and studied its various phases, with unabated interest.

I am very forcibly reminded to-day of the great change in public sentiment on the subject of Slavery, by the contrast between this meeting and similar ones held in other days in this same city of Columbus. Then no church could be had for the use of such a convention. On one occasion we met in the old U. S. Court room, and deliberated amid the noise and confusion of a mob. On another the meetings were held in an old building used, I think, as a lyceum or possibly a play-house. Then delegates were obliged to crowd the hotels and lodge on the floor sometimes twenty and thirty in a single room. Now the doors of this beautiful Christian temple are thrown wide open for our accommodation, and the courtesies and hospitalities of the city are generously tendered to us. In view of such changes and of the manifold proofs of progress, the question may, and will, arise among such as look only at the outside of things, whence the propriety or necessity of this Convention? When a great and growing political party, based upon opposition to Slavery, exists, with power already to carry the elections in nearly all the Free States, why inaugurate a new measure?

It is a pertinent question, and I reply that we would not under-estimate that party which professes opposition to Slavery, nor speak disparagingly of any political movement in that direction, but my own convictions are strong, and

grow stronger by every day's observation, that the Anti-Slavery cause, if left to political parties and politicians, *is utterly lost!* Such parties and persons have but a limited range of responsibilities and a sphere of action which leaves the moral and religious bearings of the question of Slavery altogether outside of its operation.

Slaveholders and Pro-Slavery men know this and hence the change so noticeable everywhere in the mode of defence. You can all remember well, when few men had the hardihood to defend the system of Slavery as right. Almost universally it was an admitted wrong—a sin—an evil to be suffered to exist only until some good providence should reveal a remedy. The complicity of the Church with the system was deprecated as a dire necessity, and was soon to cease; it was but a question of time, and the system itself was regarded as doomed, and its probation was to be measured by circumstances not under human control.

But as the sequence to these admissions was urged home to the conscience and sense of consistency of slaveholders, and as this monster of iniquity was more and more vigorously assailed by the humanity of the nation, and hedged in by political considerations, it took shelter in the church, entrenched itself behind the pulpit, and seizing upon the horns of the altar, now claims protection and defence as a divine institution.

And there it stands to-day defiantly and scornfully deriding its assailants, while men calling themselves Christian ministers go forth, Bible in hand, its chosen champions and ablest defenders; and to-day the church is Slavery's safest and chiefest asylum.

While these things are so, it will live and grow despite all politicians and all parties. Why not? A system that is worthy of Christian baptism ought to live. Any thing that is good enough for the communion table is surely good enough for the ballot box, or for free soil or for any other place.

If Slavery has a right to Christian fellowship, it may well claim national recognition and seek the nation's protection as a paramount interest.

My brethren, the church of God cannot shift off on to any other body any one of her responsibilities. In this matter, she has a work to do, which to be well done should be done quickly. She owes it to herself, and to a suffering humanity and to an offended God, to purge away from all her branches this foul wrong, and to free herself from all complicity with this whole system.

Let Slavery be dragged from the altars of God and driven forth to fare as it may in the open field, where an outraged and indignant humanity may vindicate itself by consigning the whole system to an early and ignominious grave.

Gentlemen, I trust that your deliberations will be characterized by a calm and sound discretion, and yet with such a manifest spirit of determination as shall certify to the world that the objects of this Convention are to be prosecuted to a successful issue.

The following Resolutions reported by the Committee through Rev. J. A. Thome, were adopted after thorough discussion and slight amendments:—

1. *Resolved*, That the natural law, giving to every human being the right to live, to that liberty which is necessary to cherish and protect life, obtain knowledge and prepare for heaven, is but the clearly revealed will of God.

2. That to enslave innocent men and women, paralyzing their moral faculties, shutting out the light of truth from their understandings, and compelling them to drag out an earthly existence amidst the gloom and darkness of moral death, constitutes one of the most aggravated violations of God's will, one of the most momentous crimes presented to human consideration.

3. That the turpitude of this crime rests on all who capture, enslave, import, sell, purchase, hold, re-capture, or re-enslave human beings, and on all who aid, encourage, pass, approve or enforce enactments for the capture, enslaving, holding, re-capture, or re-enslavement of God's image, and the persons thus offending will be held responsible at the bar of God.

4. That governments are constituted among men to secure the enjoyment of human rights, and they hold no just authority to violate the will of God nor to deprive the humblest individual of his liberty; that Congress in passing the fugitive slave act of 1850, conferred no right upon slave catchers to capture or enslave, to re-capture or re-enslave men; nor did they impose upon any person the duty to obey such enactment; nor is the law of God, nor are the inalienable rights of man, charged or modified by such enactment; nor are our Christian duties to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, protect and defend the lives and liberties of ourselves and fellow men, impaired or changed by that enactment.

5. That said Fugitive Slave Act does not command that which is right, nor does it forbid that which is wrong—it comes within no description of law and possesses not the essential elements of law; it is an assertion of the will of slaveholders, and not the will of God; it is the mandate of despotism and not the statute or the law of a Christian people; to maintain it is to uphold Slavery in its worst and most revolting features; for the State to permit its enforcement on the soil of Ohio constitutes a surrender of the rights and the dignity of our State and the liberties of our people.

6. That, irrespective of political organizations, we will not knowingly vote for any man for office, who hesitates to assert, and to the extent of his religious, moral and political influence maintain, the right of our State and its people to be entirely exempt from the expense, the guilt and disgrace of supporting the Slavery of other States.

7. That it is the duty of Christians and of Christian ministers to bear faithful testimony against the sin of Slavery ecclesiastically, socially, and politically, through the pulpit and the religious press, and to carry the wrings of the oppressed to the throne of grace in importunate prayer, that God may speedily deliver them that are in bonds.

8. That to have any voluntary agency, official or otherwise, in the re-capture or rendition of a fugitive slave, is incompatible with Christian character, and unless repented of, should be punished by excommunication in the case of any church member guilty of this crime against humanity and God; that this Convention do therefore approve of the act of excommunication recently by the Market Street Baptist Church of Zanesville, Muskingum county, against a member who, in the capacity of deputy U. S. Marshal, restored a fugitive to his claimant in Virginia.

9. That the example of the Oberlin-Wellington Rescuers in patiently suffering a long imprisonment for their noble disregard of the unconstitutional and unchristian Fugitive Slave Act, not accepting deliverance on any terms that would compromise principle and weaken the moral effect of their act and testimony, and finally triumphing over the Government, and gaining a release honorable to themselves, but disgraceful to their prosecutors, and

humiliating to the slave power, meets our hearty commendation, and calls forth our gratitude to God, whose wisdom guided and whose grace sustained them.

The fourth Resolution being read, Mr. Giddings said he hoped members would express themselves fully upon it, as it would attract more attention than any other.

Rev. Mr. Rankin favored its adoption. The Fugitive Slave Law contravened the law of God, which forbade man-stealing. It committed a crime worse than man-stealing; for simply to sell a slave did not expose him to the vindictive cruelties of a master enraged by his escape. To return a slave was worse than to steal a man. It was a crime visited with the punishment of God. Mr. Rankin gave instances of the miserable fate of United States Marshals and other slave-catchers, which had taken place under his own observation. He believed that Providence directly punished this sin.

Rev. Mr. Gordon referred to the late speech of Mr. Stephens of Georgia, who defended Slavery on Higher Law ground—that was where Slavery should be met. He thought we had not taken high enough ground, and he was glad to find slaveholders inviting us to do so.

Mr. Guthrie thought this resolution the most important, because it involved practical results. Not long since a fugitive had been decoyed into the hands of the slave-catchers, in the city (Zanesville) near which he lived, by machinations which would have disgraced a fiend, and a deacon of the church—he would name him unhesitatingly, for he understood that he gloried in the deed—felt called on by the law to do his utmost for the fugitive's return to Slavery. The question was a practical one. The members of that Convention might be called upon to put their principles to the test before night. Mr. Guthrie related an anecdote of A. K. Marshal of Kentucky, who once sat behind him in a car while he was denouncing the Fugitive Law to Mr. English of Indiana. Marshal was asked if he would help a United States official to execute the law. He replied that he would see him damned first.

Rev. Mr. Fee of Kentucky was surprised that the Higher Law need be discussed in Ohio. Slaveholders all acted upon an understanding of the Higher Law. Last Sabbath he had heard a slaveholder preach the Higher Law in Kentucky. He held up the Bible, and proclaimed to his hearers that that book was above all law. The case was illustrated thus: A wife was to obey her husband under Providence—that is, when he bade her to do right; and the child the parent, except when commanded to do wrong. We are bound to obey God, all human governments to the contrary. He had proclaimed in Kentucky that no law against God's law should be obeyed; and the would act with no party which would permit it to exist.

Rev. Mr. Perkins declared that all human laws must derive their power from God's laws; if we rejected this theory we were atheists. Nobody could controvert this theory, but a practical difficulty often arose. The officials under the Constitution were determined to carry out the law. We were Scripturally commanded to be in subjection to government. We must therefore

either have the law pronounced unconstitutional, or change the Constitution. He held that in case of disobedience to the law, we had no business to excite rebellion against it. We might disobey and suffer the penalty. In this way the example of the Oberlin Rescuees was of more effect than the transactions of any convention.

Mr. Giddings followed. He recounted the leading circumstances of the *Amistad* case, and contrasted the merciful treatment the Spanish slaves received at the hands of their ignorant and pagan negroes, with that of the fugitive at Cincinnati, whom a United States officer shot down before his wife. And no one in the city had the greatness of soul to attempt to rescue the survivor. She was torn from the body of her husband and consigned to Slavery.

Mr. Perkins said the church had been unfaithful to her duty.

Mr. Giddings exclaimed, The church! God save us from the church! What had she ever done? Where was she then? The murderer of that fugitive walked the streets unmolested. The public mind was debauched by the fact. Because men had surrendered to Slavery, the Fugitive Law was in existence.

He wanted everybody to understand what Slavery was. He would tell them—no, he could not. He would only refer them to the charge of Judge Ruffin of Carolina, who declared that the slave *was doomed to live without knowledge*—and to the decision of a higher tribunal, *that he had no rights*.

He would say to the country, that the anti-slavery Christians have declared only what had been declared by every jurist and publicist for seventy years.

Mr. Giddings was alluding to the degradation of the pulpit, on this question, when it was proposed to take a recess till after supper.

Before adjournment, the following Committee was appointed to report a plan of future operations:

Rev. E. H. Fairchild, Rev. W. H. Brewster, Hon. J. S. Carpenter, Jacob Emrick, Esq., Rev. John G. Fee, Rev. Wm. Geer, Rev. David Craig, Dr. Geo. L. Weed, David Sinsabaugh, Esq., and Rev. Joel Thrap.

EVENING SESSION.

Convention met at 8 o'clock. Prayer by the Rev. Anson Smythe. Mr. Giddings concluded his remarks. He referred to the degradation of the popular mind before Slavery. It was the besetting sin of the nation to bow in submission to this power, and its want of manhood to resist its demands. Mr. Webster declared that it was the duty of the people to submit to the Fugitive Law, and the people followed; and now it is proclaimed by the Supreme Court that black men have no rights that white men are bound to respect. The people are responsible at the bar of God for the maintenance of their rights. Neither Mr. Webster nor Buchanan could justify them there. We have seen the sentiment of our own State subdued to Slavery, until now it was preached that it is our duty to seize men and return them to bondage.

Why do we not assert equal manhood with the slave power? Slavery

says, "Hands off! Slavery is ours; we will maintain it." He said, "Liberty is ours, we will maintain it." If we say to our public men, If you degrade us we will degrade you, they will stand up as boldly for freedom. He had some experience in that. The popular mind will always be governed by truth and justice. If ministers and public men will stand up for these, the people will always sustain them. The county of Lorain had firmly maintained the rights of the people. They had indicted the kidnappers, and if they had not been voluntarily released, he firmly believed they would now be in the Ohio Penitentiary. He was charged with going too far when he declared that he would resist a slave-catcher with force; but there is a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue or Christian duty.

When the question was put to him on the floor of Congress, he had said that a slave had a right to relieve himself from bondage at whatever cost and by any means. He had no right to yield himself and his posterity to Slavery, Christianity forbids. He would not needlessly risk life, but whenever he could prevent the return of a fugitive to Slavery, he would at the peril of life. He was called a fanatic, and admitted it. He had lived to see wonderful progress in popular sentiment. Ten years ago he was the sole representative in Congress of the opposition to Slavery. Now it had almost got the control of the nation. This Convention would be assailed as abolition; but no one would dare take issue squarely with their resolutions—these were impregnable.

He stated that four or five years ago he went to Bloomington, Ill., where he had an appointment to speak. The Whigs begged him to desist. His sentiments would ruin the party. A Democrat, one of their best speakers and most notorious blackguards, came there to use him up. He persisted in attending the meeting, although the Whigs deserted it so that he had to go on without an organization. His opponent was there. He proposed a joint discussion, and that each should answer freely the questions of the other as to his principles. This was accepted by his opponent, who came forward. Mr. Giddings then declared his principles—that all men were endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which were life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. He demanded if his opponent admitted that. He refused to answer. Failing in this, he said he would make one more effort to draw him out. He believed that governments were formed to maintain these rights, and demanded if his opponent conceded that. This, also, he refused to answer, and the audience raised such a shout against him, that after Mr. Giddings was through his opponent devoted his entire effort to quarreling with them. This would be the case with these resolutions. No man in Ohio will dare deny their principles before an audience. We now have the means to bring these doctrines before the popular mind in all parts of the State. The press is open to them, or nearly so. Fifty thousand voters in the State will refuse to vote for any man who is unsound on these principles.

He had been accused of injuring the Republican Party. He was bound to no party except as it sustained truth and justice. That party had lost moral

power by its course on this question. Men in it had said, "Catch the fugitive!" This Convention is not asked to interfere with politics, but as Christians we have no right to deny God's law and man's rights. The idea of separating politics from religion is heresy, atheism. If you deny the law of Christ, "Whatever ye would that others do to you do ye also unto them," how can you stand before God? Men who can separate their politics from their religion have little of one and nothing to brag on of the other. Clergymen are bound to use their influence always for God's law and man's right.

He had been bitterly assailed by the Democratic press because he said that the kidnappers should have been hanged. He would say that his intervention saved them and the United States Judge and jurors from hanging; and standing here to-day, he had doubts whether he had done his duty. Civil war was waged against four or five hundred men on the Reserve, to carry them back to slavery. Jurors to indict and jurors to convict were selected by the Marshal, so as to insure an indictment and prescribed verdict. It was nothing less than a conspiracy against the liberty of the people. No one can deny the right of a man to assert his own liberty and use means requisite to obtain it. At Oberlin a fugitive armed himself with a club and assaulted the Deputy Marshal who came to seize him. The people rescued the Marshal. They should not have interfered. He who would enslave men, deserved no mercy. The fugitives were determined to carry the war into Africa, against the jurors and judges. If these trials had continued, would we have prevented?

Would State Courts have punished them? He would stand up in our Courts to prevent the laws of Ohio from being prostituted to such a purpose. On the Reserve a jury cannot be got to return a verdict against a fugitive for maintaining his liberty. When he was assailed in the House on this point by Mr. Venable of North Carolina, he said that if he followed his slave to Ohio and there the slave killed him, he would defend the slave in our Courts. These were the sentiments of his heart, nor did he believe that those of Washington, the Adamses and Jefferson were different.

He himself desired to take what odium was heaped on his doctrines; they were his own, not the Convention's. To maintain their resolutions they had only to stand up to their manhood and declare them firmly. Men will assail and vilify you, but will never deny the principles you are about to put forth.

Mr. Giddings afterwards added some expressions of gratification at the vast uprising of popular sentiment on this subject.

Mr. Brown said: There were but few in attendance from the Miami Valley. Assembling from different parts of the State, they brought different views. Some had made greater progress. To make the anti-slavery sentiment in that valley, it was requisite that the Convention logically, Biblically and legally state their resolutions. He believed the Fugitive Law unconstitutional, and in the right of forcible resistance when all other means were exhausted, but was not satisfied that the time had yet come, and for his part was not yet prepared for nullification. He would not obey the law, but when he violated it he would suffer the penalty. There was a distinction between

suffering penalty for passive disobedience of wicked laws and forcible resistance. He desired the Convention to plant a banner around which all could rally.

He referred to the course of the colonies against Great Britain. They petitioned and remonstrated until these had been found futile; then revolutionized—owing to their wisdom in this, we were here to-day to remonstrate against Slavery. The law was a wicked one, but it was sustained by decisions usually regarded as law; and he could not say that it possessed none of the elements of law. Have all means been tried for its repeal? He wanted to see monster petitions sent in to Congress. When all these means were exhausted, then he was ready for revolution.

Formerly the South excused Slavery as forced upon them. Now when they assert it is a God-given right, and send ships to Africa for fresh supplies, it is time for the church to denounce it. When all peaceable means had failed, then he would be ready to resist to the knife if necessary.

Judge Carpenter of Summit, said :

The discussion seemed to have reached a point where issue was taken upon this question, May a statute, regularly enacted by a law-making power, regularly and properly constituted, in any case be rightfully resisted? And, secondly, if in any such case resistance may be rightfully made, How shall we know when such case occurs? He believed a law-making power, regularly and properly constituted, might so usurp dominion—might so transcend all lawful human authority, that its subjects might rightfully refuse obedience to its enactments—nay, that it might become their duty to resist the execution of such enactments; and not only their duty to resist, but to make open proclamation of their resistance. Several cases had been supposed by gentlemen who had preceded him, which he thought were in point; but he would endeavor to carry the illustration farther, and spread the principle upon so broad a surface that men could see it as they ran.

The question had been forcibly put by our venerable friend from Ashtabula, whether his friend before him would be under any obligation to submit to any statute making him a slave, and it seemed to him that every heart and understanding in the assembly responded, No! But if there was any lingering doubt, let it be considered that, if any obligation to obedience resulted from such enactment, it would result because such enacting power was absolute and illimitable—because it could rightfully do just what it pleased. If the law-making power might do just what it pleased, then it need not stop with making him a slave—if the power was rightfully without limit, absolute, it might take away life as well as liberty. If the law-making power, in virtue of its sheer sovereignty, might lawfully use his body and life as property, in virtue of the same sovereignty it might lawfully take away his life and use his dead carcass as property. The power which, because it was without the limit of any higher law, could lawfully make him property, could for want of any higher law, take away his life and use his lifeless body

as property—it might broil and eat it, or eat it without broiling;—nay, it might broil and eat him dead or alive. The power which, because there is no higher law, can make Slavery lawful, can, because there is no higher law, make cannibalism lawful.

Now suppose any law-making power, ever so regularly and properly constituted, but unlimited by any constitution in this respect, or by any higher law, should, in manner and form ever so regular, enact that the majority might kill and eat the minority at will, does anybody believe such a statute would be obligatory on the minority? Has anybody the folly to pretend that the minority ought, because of any authority in the enactment, to forbear even the bloodiest resistance? And if a legislative act of this description could carry no lawful authority, could a judicial judgment give it any? If a body rightfully constituted to make laws could give it no lawful authority, could a body constituted only to administer laws, give it lawful authority? "I care not," said he, "how final its adjudications may be, it cannot make law of that which is no law—and no power can make law of that which in the nature of things cannot be law."

An existing case, as well as supposed ones, which to him, he said, seemed in point, had been put by other gentlemen in the case of the Fugitive Slave Law. But another case occurred to him which he thought so plain that it would illustrate even the Fugitive Slave Law. He meant the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It might appear like introducing a political discussion; but he had a right to use it by way of illustration of the principle, and he would carry its use no farther. That act declared that the people of a territory had a right to "form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way"—this meant that they had a right to make slaves; for the prohibition of the Missouri Compromise had to be got rid of to make room for this act. This act then meant, that the people of a territory, by force of their inherent governmental sovereignty, have an absolute unlimited right to say who of their number shall be slaves and who shall be freemen. It virtually declared that the majority might make slaves of the minority, if they saw fit. And not that alone, it virtually declares that the strongest party—the successful power, whether majority or minority, may make slaves of all the rest. For, if the people of a territory start with the assumption that they may determine who of their number shall do all the drudgery, and that these drudges shall be property, they assume this right in virtue of a sovereignty which is absolute and illimitable for want of any higher law. Let us see then how the scheme operates. "I say," said Mr. Carpenter, "that it is absolute despotism—that the doctrine of popular sovereignty as proclaimed in the Kansas-Nebraska Act is that of unlimited autocracy and nothing shorter—simple one-man despotism and nothing else. For think of it. If the majority make property of the minority, that minority is no longer any part of the government. The minority is deposed from the governing power and set aside as chattels. The majority then remains the entire government. But that governing number may, the

next moment, undergo another just such division into a majority and minority, and this second minority be set aside as chattels, and the whole government consist of that majority. And forthwith a third and like division with a like result may be had; and so on till the last minority shall consist of one, and the last majority of two. Of these two, on the principle that sovereignty is the highest, that is, the strongest power, the stronger must of course prevail and be alone the government, the lawful government—the government of squatter sovereignty. It matters not whether this is Douglassism, or whatever ism it may be, it is the logical and ultimate result of the popular sovereignty of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Absolute despotism—the great principle of popular sovereignty without the Higher Law!"

"Sir," said Mr. Carpenter, "you and I have been taught from our infancy that human sovereignty resides with the people and nowhere else. But, we have been taught that no human sovereignty is absolute and illimitable—that men have no right to make laws or constitutions just as they please, in their own way, unrestrained by any higher law; that all lawful human authority is limited by the equal rights of all men—those inalienable rights which are an inherent and essential part of every human being."

But, he said, it is asked—Who shall judge when the constituted authorities have attained a despotism that justifies resistance? There is one infallible rule, of universal application, by which every one may determine the question. Whenever the government professes the right to absolute power, unlimited by those equal rights essential to human nature, that very profession proclaims open rebellion against the fundamental law of all rightful government. It is not the people, then, whose resistance is rebellion against the law; it is the government, then, claiming its right in might alone, which lifts the standard of rebellion against the law—a law fundamental and common to all rightful government and especially the common law of our government, as we have always been taught. And it matters not, whether this proclamation of rebellion against this fundamental law is made in the act of organizing a government wherein the strongest party claims the right, without limit by any higher law than its own will, "to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way," or whether it is made by a Congress assuming to act under a constitution, or whether it is made by a court whose adjudications are carried out as final. Whenever this claim of illimitable power is put in exercise, that act is itself rebellion against the common law of all rightful government, and may be lawfully resisted. Why, this is nothing new. The whole question was tried and decided by our Revolutionary Fathers. The very point in their contest was, whether human government could be entitled to this illimitable authority. Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his pamphlet "Taxation no Tyranny," quoted with so much self-satisfaction by the attorney for the government in the Cleveland Rescue Cases, denounced the colonists as rebels for assuming that the sovereignty of Great Britain, constituted in the king and Parliament, could be wrong. And he asks with an air of triumph, whether a wretched minority in North

America were to determine it against a majority and the sovereignty of the realm! Our fathers replied with the Declaration of Independence, that all human sovereignty is limited by the equal and inalienable rights of man, and that the very assumption of sovereignty, without this limit, had made the mother government a rebel against the law. Dr. Johnson stood precisely upon the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and that act was but the revision of the old claim of Great Britain against her colonies. If this is the Douglas platform, or any other platform, we cannot help it;—it assumes the right of human sovereignty to exercise illimitable power;—it proclaims rebellion against the fundamental law of government; and whoever attempts the exercise of such power may be rightfully resisted.

At the suggestion of Mr. Fairchild, who made a brief argument to show that Mr. Brown really went as far as any of them, the resolution was verbally amended, so as to declare that the Fugitive Law did not contain the essential elements of law.

Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Giddings being in the chair, said that was the most important resolution. The question of resistance may practically come home to him at any time. He lived where to resist the law was to get shot down. It was simply madness to attempt to resist that law by force. He had not reached the point where revolution was expedient or a duty. Fifty people might be shot down in resisting the law in his vicinity, and yet no change effected in public sentiment.

When the Federal officials were chasing the negro Jackson at Zanesville he remonstrated; and he was told by one of these, that it was they, the white niggers, that caused these difficulties, and that they had a right to call on him to help catch the negro. He replied that such a call would be in vain; but he was not prepared to face these men, and be shot down to no purpose. He believed that victories were sometimes won without resort to the sword.

Prof. Peck inquired if any one had maintained that resistance was a duty under all circumstances. He had held that under certain circumstances he would help those whom the law made outcasts and deprived of all protection.

He did not affirm the right of resistance for himself under all circumstances, but there were circumstances in which he would rescue those whom the law deprived of all rights, at whatever risk.

The resolution was adopted unanimously as amended, and the Convention adjourned till to-morrow morning, (Aug. 11,) at 8 o'clock.

SECOND DAY.

The Convention met this morning at eight o'clock, and was opened by the reading of a chapter of Scripture, 12th Romans, by the President, and prayer by the Rev. A. Pinney of Zanesville.

The discussion of the resolutions was continued.

On the seventh resolution, Prof. Peck remarked substantially as follows:

One clause of this resolution emphasizes the duty of Christians to bear testimony against slavery *by suitable political action*. I wish to say a few words on this point.

We, who compose this Convention, hold, at least in theory, that it is both the duty and the privilege of Christians to prove their zeal for freedom and justice by taking part in politics. It is doubtful whether there is one of us who does not repudiate the doctrine that Religion goes out of its sphere when it enters the political arena and who does not think that Religion is to go wherever human action is called for, and especially wherever action so important in its moral and social bearing as is that in the political direction, is required.

And it is a happy thing for our country that Christians quite generally are adopting what seem to us right views on this subject.

But *theory* has not yet been suitably resolved into practice in this matter. Good men do not altogether rid themselves of the idea that taking part in politics is derogatory to the Christian profession and detrimental to Christian character. Hence they too often keep aloof from political associations and political endeavors. Even when there is urgent need of their taking the field, they stay at home, leaving the management of public affairs to schemers who shape issues and name candidates as their own interests shall require. When the *Deserve* was convulsed, two months since, with fervid indignation at the Fugitive Slave Act and its fruits, a strongly anti-slavery township in which Christian abolitionists hold a preponderating social and, when they will claim it, political influence, was, by the absence of true men from the primary meeting, represented in the county and, through it in the State, Republican Convention, by men who were far from being real exponents of the views of their constituents, and whose action in Convention was any thing but just to the suffering cause of freedom. Such a case reminds us that Christians generally, and even we ourselves, may need prompting on the point to which I am speaking.

Let me therefore remind myself and you that the moral power of a truly disinterested Christian purpose is such that whenever and wherever it is expressed, it cannot but be recognized and felt. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." This is not less true of political than it is of any other form of association. If but a few Christian people will earnestly, wisely and with forgetfulness of self enter a political party and keep their influence actively bearing on the party, they will seldom fail of having their principles regarded in both the making of the party platform and the nomination of candidates. This should encourage Christians to feel that they will not labor in vain if they take their proper place on the field of political action.

But what should Christians *do* politically? I answer, in the first place, they should *not* seek office for themselves nor insist that office shall be given only to Christians. A Christian dishonors himself and the cause he professes to love, by *seeking office*. Nor should he claim that only Christians shall be put into official positions. He should be satisfied if good men who are not Christians are chosen to office. By being generous in this regard, he will promote the name and honor of the great cause he loves.

But, passing on, Christians should, by meriting it, *secure for themselves an*

influential standing in political parties. They should do this by propagating such just principles as the party has avowed; and by laboring otherwise for its extension. They should do it by being in their places, in the various meetings of the party, especially in the primary meetings in which measures are initiated. The Christian who thinks that the primary meeting is no place for him, should not complain if his wishes are overlooked in the making of platforms and the nomination of candidates. The time for him to secure a hearing, and to accomplish something to the purpose, is when schemers have not yet laid their wires and forestalled public opinion against him.

Then, again, having earned political standing, the Christian should vigilantly watch lest the principles he loves be set aside at the behests of policy, and should continually admonish leaders against selling right for success.

As political parties approach predominance, they are apt to think it worth their while to make sure of purchasing the adhesion of such mercenaries as are in the market, by letting down principle or by sacrificing their representative men. They reason that they are sure of the staunch men they have already enrolled, and that they can quiet any who may be disaffected by compromise measures, by proving to them what gains the compromise will bring. Thus has more than one noble party been debauched. And the victory which is gained in this way is always worse than defeat.

Against such a demoralization of their party, Christians should be watchful. They should instantly protest against any departure from principle which either designing or mistaken leaders propose. And if they speak earnestly and decidedly, they will not speak in vain. The setting aside by the last Republican State Convention of the Judge elected to this office by eighty thousand majority, against whose decision as to the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Act earnest anti-slavery men from the Reserve set themselves, proves what can be done in a political party by a few resolute men who faithfully adhere to principle.

Such, in outline, is the political action which Christians should zealously and prayerfully maintain, and for which the resolution before us calls.

And, surely, there never was a time when such action was more imperatively called for than it is now. In our own State, one great party is making support of the diabolical Fugitive Slave Act the corner stone of its policy; and the other is in imminent peril of taking a false position on the questions at issue, in order to get or keep the adhesion of "lower-law" elements. The danger to which the "party of freedom" is exposed, is revealed in the fact that the party papers are quite generally quoting without protest Mr. Corwin's infamous declaration at Xenia, that while the Fugitive Slave Act is law it must be obeyed; and if men will not obey it, they must be punished; and that, for his part, if the law should require it, *he would help bring the fanatics who will insist on disobeying it, to the block.* It is certainly high time for Christians in Ohio to bestir themselves lest the party to which most of them belong should become inoculated with consent to such doctrines and with a willingness to follow such leaders.

In national politics, too, we see proofs of a crisis which calls for outspoken and immediate action on the part of anti-slavery Christians. Every mail brings us leading Republican papers, some of them once radical in their doctrines, the columns of which are freighted with arguments going to prove that the party which they represent *must succeed, and that to succeed it must make itself a mere opposition party, and so lower its principles that even slave-holders can join it.*

Have we not yet been sufficiently taught that Slavery is so aggressive and intrusive that it will be arrested only by peremptory measures, and that defences against it must be made higher rather than lower? Against the threatened breaking down of the *principles* of the party, let Christian anti-slavery men cry out.

With this disposition to abate the real principles of the party of freedom, there is a growing inclination to work into its platform new principles, some of which are grossly offensive to Christian philanthropy. Lately, thousands of extra copies of a paper (the Gazette) published in this city, carried to the Republicans of the North-West the proposition to demand the nomination to the Presidency of Gov. Chase, and to the Vice Presidency, of Edmund Bates, (of St. Louis,) on a moderate western platform which, as the phrase was, "should have no Sambo in it." For my own part, greatly as I esteem and much as I have labored for the distinguished gentleman whose name was made prominent in this connection, I could, on no account, esteem or labor for him longer, if I supposed, as I do not at all suppose, that he would lend himself to a movement which should explicitly ignore the wrongs of the colored race. Nor can Christians too jealously watch against the incorporation into the political creeds to which they adhere, of anti-humanity doctrines avowed for the sake of success.

There is then great need, at the present time, of the distinct and practical recognition by American Christians of the resolution before us. And where may a revival of interest in this doctrine better begin than here? and where may it better begin than among the Christian yeomanry of the free North-West? Among them, conservatism has not crystalized into its usual hardness; enterprise still quickens religion as well as art and commerce. The masses of them act and think apart from the dictation of leaders. Among them therefore, and now, let us begin a new work. Let us take the field before politicians have matured their plans and inaugurated measures which, once set in motion, cannot be resisted. Let Northwestern Christians, assembled in the great North-Western city this fall, pledge each other and declare to the country that, while they will not insist upon men, they *will insist upon principles*, and that they will not act in any political association which either ignores humanity or buys success with compromise.

The principal debate took place on a motion to strike out the reference in the 8th resolution, to the action of the Zanesville Baptist Church. The friends of this motion argued that the Convention ought to be general and not particular in its action, and that it ought not therefore to particularize the

present case. Those opposed contended that it was an example in the providence of God which ought to be held up to general imitation.

A great number spoke in regard to the matter, but these were the points of the discussion. The amendment was finally yielded, and the resolution passed as originally offered.

Rev. E. H. Fairchild read the following report :—

The Committee appointed to propose a plan of operations for the future, respectfully submit the following report :

We recommend,

1. That this Convention appoint a committee of twelve men, representing different parts of the State and different denominations of Christians, to be known as the General State Committee, whose duty it shall be to manage and promote the interests of the anti-slavery cause as they are represented by this Convention, for the ensuing year, and until they are discharged by a similar Convention, to be called by themselves, at the most suitable time and place next year.

2. That this Committee be recommended to appoint a general agent, richly imbued with the love of God and man, who shall lecture through the State for the ensuing year, and collect funds for the promotion of our cause.

3. That the General Agent, with the direction of a sub-committee, to be appointed by the committee of twelve, be authorized to employ other lecturers, whenever and wherever suitable men can be obtained, as far as the state of the treasury will permit.

4. That these lecturers provide themselves with anti-slavery books and tracts, under the direction of the sub-committee, and sell them as extensively as possible through the State ; also that they act as agents for anti-slavery papers.

5. That the Committee and general agent be advised to secure, as far as possible, the co-operation of the churches and ministers of the State, and of county committees to be appointed by county Christian anti-slavery Conventions.

6. That the Committee be advised to establish, if they shall deem it expedient, a Christian anti-slavery paper, as an advocate of our principles and a means of communication, and that they be required to publish from time to time, an account of their proceedings.

7. That the Committee be instructed to correspond with prominent friends of our cause in other States, recommending a system of operations similar to our own ; and also, with reference to a great North-Western Christian Anti-Slavery Convention to be held late in the autumn.

8. That the surplus funds, beyond what can be profitably employed in this State, be expended in the circulation of anti-slavery literature in the Southern States.

9. That we commence a subscription, on the spot, as a nucleus of a fund to enable our Committee to prosecute the cause immediately.

10. That we request all the Christian ministers of the State to embrace an early opportunity to present to their congregations the evil and sin of slavery, and the duties of the people in regard to it.

The report was adopted.

A Committee of five, viz: Rev. E. H. Fairchild, L. L. Rice, Esq., Rev. W. H. Brewster, Rev. John Lawrence and Rev. William Perkins, was appointed to nominate a General State Committee of twelve to superintend the interests of the cause throughout the State during the ensuing year.

Prof. Peck, from the Committee appointed to prepare an address, read the following, which was unanimously adopted :—

To the Christian Men and Women of Ohio, interested in the advancement of Freedom and the extinguishment of Slavery :

It can hardly be necessary to call your attention to the pressing occasion for a renewal of anti-slavery zeal and effort on the part of the earnest Christian people of our land.

We need to revive our own sense of the intense wickedness of the system of oppression which prevails, and to arouse ourselves to do what we can to produce a conviction of its wickedness in others.

By a sort of general consent, the discussion of the duties and interests involved in the existence and aggressions of Slavery has, these many years past, been transferred to the arena of politics ; and while it has become thus a potent element, causing the downfall and rise of politicians and political parties and controlling the action of legislatures and of governments, there has not seemed to be a corresponding accumulation of moral power brought to bear upon the vulnerable points of this system of wickedness. Nay, Slavery has seemed to gather strength and courage and boldness in the conflict, because the attack has been made upon its best fortified positions, and attention has been diverted to a great extent from its weaker side. Slavery has been glad to take shelter in such defenses as the "Compromises of the Constitution," the "acknowledged rights of property," the "common inheritance in the territories," the claims of "law and order," and has acquired self-respect and presented a show of propriety in the stand it has made.

On the other hand, the friends of freedom, consenting to this arbitrament of the controversy, have reserved their most reliable forces, their irresistible weapons, and have sacrificed or forborne to use many of the advantages of their position—or, distrusting this method of conducting the work, have altogether retired from the conflict and are waiting a more auspicious opportunity.

We do not regret that Slavery has become the rallying point of all the political forces in the land, nor do we propose any attempt to divert the public interest from this form of the conflict. Such a result was inevitable in the nature of the case, and we accept it as an indication of Providence, showing where our work lies, and summoning us to its accomplishment. It is a token of good to truth and to humanity, that questions of such vast magnitude, involving all that is dear to men—all the interests of morality and religion, are forced upon the public attention ; and that questions of mere pecuniary profit and loss, and of temporary expediency, are thrown into the background. It affords a rare opportunity to impress the public mind with the great principles of righteousness ; to bring out and set forth the higher obligations and interests of life, and to lift up a standard against in-rushing iniquity. Such opportunities are not often afforded to a people. They are the pivots upon which the destinies of nations turn. Understood and improved, they mark the times of God's visitations to establish a people

in virtue, and to lead them on to a higher prosperity. Even political strife, under such circumstances, becomes a moral conflict, and the triumph of party is the triumph of principle. But if that people in their blindness and worldliness fail to apprehend the time, the loss can never be retrieved. This or that party name may be in the ascendant, but the glory is departed; God has passed them by.

At this present hour a great responsibility rests upon men who fear God and regard his law, to see to it that the conflict which is waging shall not fail from lack of the moral element, and that God shall not be compelled to frown upon it because it does not honor Him. Christian men must claim and exercise the right to bring all these questions, supposed by some to be exclusively political, to the test of morality and religion. They must bring them to the consciences of the people as matters which cannot be neglected without involving infidelity to God and man. They must claim for the pulpit and the religious press the right to speak out in clear utterances upon the great sin and shame of our land, and must see to it that this right is accorded and that this duty is not neglected. They must make it a burden of prayer, private, domestic, social and public, that the nation may be recovered to righteousness and that the oppressed may be caused to go free. May the day forever pass when worldly men have occasion to compliment their minister because never in hymn, or prayer, or sermon has he disturbed their equanimity by a reference to the poor that cry, the needy, and them that have no helper, and when attendants upon prayer meetings are shocked, as if a political topic had been broached, because supplication is made that God's law may triumph over wickedness framed into law by men.

The curse of our land is a grievous one, founded on self-interest and confirmed by centuries of existence and toleration. It has come to be regarded as an established element in our civilization—gloried in by its advocates and endorsed by its opponents. It can never be removed until the heart of the people shall be stirred to its very depth with a sense of the sin and the disgrace; until it shall become a matter of earnest and anxious thought in the family, the school and the church. If the mercy of a peaceful deliverance from this great wrong remains to us, it must come through such a channel.

There are many evidences that the present interest in the cause of freedom must be vitalized by a higher morality—by the spirit of Christianity itself, before any satisfactory result or substantial progress can be anticipated.

1. *The Atheism*—no other name expresses it—which prevails on the question of the supremacy of God's law over human enactments, indicates a blindness scarcely removed from infatuation. If madness be the inevitable precursor of destruction, then have we not reason to apprehend that God's mercy is already withdrawn from the people? The extent to which delusion prevails on this subject is startling. Not merely the unscrupulous politician who is willing to secure his ends by any means—not merely the interested official whose pay depends upon his servility, but men long honored for their wisdom and their virtues—men looked up to as judges in the land, do not

hesitate to urge the obligation to obey a wicked enactment as long as legislatures and courts choose to call it law. They gloss the precept of God's word, "We ought to obey God rather than men," with the limitation, "unless men choose to put the expression of their will into the form of law;" and, what is still more alarming, the mass of the people seem bewildered on the subject, and hesitate which to choose, Jehovah or Baal. We would fain hope that much of this delusion is an ignorance which does not betoken wickedness; but if there be a point where the distinction fails between ignorance and sin, it must be here.

There seems to be a perversion of the best sentiments of a law-abiding people. Injustice is perpetrated and abetted and excused upon the ground that the laws must be respected and maintained. Marshals and bailiffs arrest the fugitive from oppression, and apologize for the loathsome work upon the ground that they are executing the law; commissioners and judges remand the victim to his oppressor, and call themselves the ministers of law; juries, impannelled as a safe-guard of personal liberty and the rights of man, adjudge him a criminal whose heart has been moved with sympathy for the bleeding bondman, because the law and their *oath* require it; the people, indignant, perhaps, but submissive, open their prisons to their God-fearing neighbor because he must suffer the penalty of the law; and last of all, the *habeas corpus*, the time-honored guardian of the right, looks unmoved upon the wrong, because such, from the days of the fathers, has been the order of the courts. The giant outrage at every step blasphemes the sacred names of Justice and Order and Law. When will men learn that law has a soul as well as a body, and cease to cherish and reverence the putrid form when the spirit has indignantly departed? Tyranny can devise no machinery so subservient to its own ends as this idolatry of the forms of law. It is perhaps the only sentiment which it can rally to its support in an intelligent and well ordered people. There is unspeakable danger as well as wickedness in thus perverting and abusing the wholesome instincts of men. For a time it may serve the purposes of tyranny; in the end it will occasion a terrible recoil, crushing the very framework of law and government. Human nature cannot safely and permanently be thus cheated and wronged.

Another form of this delusion is the impression that judges, and executive officers and magistrates are only a part of the machinery of government, with no individual responsibility for their official acts—that they make good their official oath, which recognizes God as over all, when they have subjected their consciences to human enactments and trampled under foot the law of God, upon the plea of sustaining the laws of men. The great patent fact is denied, that God holds all his moral creatures subjects of his government to the extent of their entire activity, and accounts as treason against himself this pretended allegiance to human requirements. There is no such exemption from individual responsibility for official acts. The abdication of individual manhood to become the instruments of government is not permitted to any of God's creatures. The deeds they do as executors of in-

famous enactments must come back with damning guilt upon their individual souls ; " when he maketh inquisition for blood he will remember them."

For this infatuation there is one remedy, sure and safe—an appeal from man's appointments to God's supreme law. Men have consciences and they will not fail to recognize the validity of such an appeal when clearly and fearlessly made. The Christians of the land owe it to God and to their country, to rally at once to these foundations which are threatened with removal. Religious teachers and ministers of God's word, the constituted exponents of his counsels, may if they will, bring back the people to sound reason, and displace this idolatry of forms with reverence for God and wholesome regard for human law. Thus only can tyranny be supplanted and a government ordained of God be established.

2. The prevalent tendency to overlook the claims of the oppressed themselves—the injustice and wickedness of slavery, and to limit public concern to questions of interest to the dominant race—the rights and requirements of free labor, is an indication of heartlessness in this work which gives no promise of good. It is the sin of slavery which threatens the welfare of our country, which is corrupting the life blood of society, and provoking the wrath of Heaven. An ill-adjusted system of labor, an unnecessary burden of taxation, an unequal distribution of the advantages of government—all the natural evils resulting from slavery, we could tolerate and sustain ; but the debasement of the public conscience, the corruption of the public morals, the Nemesis which pursues with sleepless vigilance a nation of oppressors—this burden we cannot endure. One only path of safety opens to us—that of " doing justly and loving mercy and walking humbly with our God." This work is scarce begun. Our politicians are interested to provide free territory for free men, and to lay strong platforms, broad enough for a " white man's party," but what trifling is this ? The great guilt of oppression with its impending retribution still abides—the great duty " to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke," still remains undone. We do not wish to undervalue the political anti-slavery interest which prevails ; but how little of it has even the semblance of repentance for wrong doing and of zeal for righteousness ? Here is work for the Christian men of the land.

3. Closely allied to this indifference to the claims of the oppressed, is the cold-hearted and repelling prejudice which exists against the colored race, both bond and free—a standing illustration of the truth discovered of old, that men hate those whom they have injured.

There is scarce a tendency in our political movements to abate this cruel sentiment, or to correct the wrongs which spring from it. Black laws defile the statute books of our own and other free States, excluding the colored race from the polls, from the public schools and from other privileges of citizens : and no political party has the courage to demand that the barbarism shall be expunged. But why speak of political parties, when this plague-spot mars even our " feasts of charity,"—when churches, and altars,

and public and private charities are stained with the defilement? Let us remove this beam from our own eye, that we may see clearly to extract the mote from our brother's eye. We deny the false science which assigns a diversity of origins to the human race—shall we take to our hearts a religion which fails to recognize that God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth?

4. Need we speak of the *slave-trade*, which is already lifting its hideous form in the open presence of the nation?—the veriest monstrosity of wickedness which the sun ever looked upon! It demands the right to be, as the fit offspring of slavery, that “mother of abominations,” and has not slavery been sanctioned and sanctified by two hundred years of legislation? Where is the moral force to grapple with the demon? Where even the heaven-appointed stripling, with his few smooth stones to meet this monster “that defies the armies of the living God?” Here and there is raised the feeble remonstrance, “Why do ye so wickedly;” but there is needed the concentrated moral indignation of the people to blast it with a breath. The revival of the slave-trade is little less than a settled fact. The public mind is daily becoming accustomed to the idea, and the prospect is that soon the South and the North will become alike involved in the practice, the profits and the shame of this last invention of oppression. “Shall not God visit for these things? Shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this?”

5. In the very presence of these great wrongs, there is pressing danger in the disposition to narrow the basis of the anti-slavery party to a few principles of general policy, leaving almost untouched the vital questions of freedom and slavery—danger that the aims of the people will become as narrow and soulless as the platforms of the party—danger that even these few principles will at length be surrendered to the demand for a “more liberal basis,” which shall sacrifice strength of principle to strength of numbers, resulting in the unmeaning triumph of an “opposition”—danger that candidates for office will be sought, not among those who have positive convictions and a corresponding practice, those who have been tried and found faithful, but from men of uncertain position and unknown principles—men who will prove a broken reed in the day of trial, to those who trust in them.

To preserve the small remnant of vitality which now exists in the anti-slavery party, there is an absolute need of a higher demand in the people—greater earnestness of aim and effort—a fuller conviction of the wrongfulness of slavery—deeper sympathy with the slave, and a determination that never wavers, that the monstrous wrong shall cease. What power but that of Christian benevolence and zeal shall breathe this spirit abroad upon the people?

In conclusion, let us say, that we counsel no fanaticism, religious or political. We do not expect to cast out devils in the name of the prince of devils. The Christian zeal and effort which we commend is the only proper antidote to fanaticism. Bitter and malignant zeal springs up in the presence of great wrongs unrebuked by those whose obvious duty it is to rebuke them—re-

garded with indifference by those whose souls should kindle with intense anxiety to abate them. We only ask you, Christian friends, to look our nation's sin and shame in the face—to let it rest with solemn weight upon your conscience and your heart, and prompt you to such effort and tempered zeal as the kindest charity shall approve. And whatever the result, you shall thus acquit yourselves of your responsibility; and if "judgment must begin at the house of God," you shall at least be spared among "those who sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the land."

The following persons were appointed a Committee to superintend the publication and distribution of the proceedings in pamphlet form, viz: A. M. Gangewer, Chairman, L. L. Rice and Dr. J. H. Coulter.

The Committee to nominate a General State Committee of twelve, reported the following names as said Committee, which report was adopted, viz: Rev. D. K. Flickinger, Dayton; M. B. Bateham, Esq., Columbus; Rev. J. T. McCready, Cadiz; Rev. George Gordon, Iberia; Rev. S. D. Bates, Marion; Rev. E. H. Fairchild, Oberlin; H. B. Spelman, Cleveland; Rev. Wm. H. Brewster, Cleveland; Rev. W. B. Watkins, Cambridge; Rev. D. A. Randall, Columbus; Rev. John Boggs, Cincinnati; Rev. John Rankin, Ripley. The name of the President of the Convention, A. A. Guthrie, was added to the Committee.

On motion of Prof. Peck, the thanks of the Convention were tendered to the citizens of Columbus for the hospitality extended to its members, and to the Congregational Church for the use of their house.

As the time of adjournment drew near, the Convention rose and sung the following:—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

After prayer by Rev. John Keep of Oberlin, the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

H. B. SPELMAN, }
W. B. WATKINS, } Secretaries.

A. A. GUTHRIE, President.

Immediately after the adjournment of the Convention, the General State Committee held a meeting and appointed the following persons an Executive Committee—Rev. E. H. Fairchild, Oberlin; Rev. W. H. Brewster, Cleveland; H. B. Spelman, Cleveland; M. B. Bateham, Columbus; and Rev. D. A. Randall, Columbus.

The Executive Committee of the General State Committee subsequently had a meeting and appointed Rev. E. H. Fairchild of Oberlin, Chairman, and H. B. Spelman of Cleveland, Secretary and Treasurer. Persons who may wish to correspond with them can address them accordingly.

During the discussion of the fourth resolution, Prof. Peck offered some very interesting and able remarks, which met a hearty response from the Convention, showing it to be the duty of Christians, not only to disobey, but under

some circumstances to resist the execution of the Fugitive Slave Act. But as he has had no opportunity to furnish a report of this speech, and as the newspaper reports are very inadequate, it is entirely omitted.

Among the many interesting and encouraging letters received, the following is deemed especially important as containing a succinct account of a similar enterprise commenced at the East:—

To the Christian Anti-Slavery Convention assembled in Columbus, Ohio, on the 10th and 11th of August, 1859.

Forasmuch as the Church Anti-Slavery Society of the United States cannot be officially represented in your body, I address you, as the Secretary, in its behalf, and would call your attention to the principles and plans of the Society, as set forth in the accompanying documents.

By them you will see that the Society has had its origin in a deep conviction of the inherent sinfulness of slave-holding, and in the solemn impression that it is time for the churches of Christ in our land, of every denomination, to be arrayed against it as the organic and towering iniquity of the nation that *must* be overthrown, in order that the "Word of God may have free course and be glorified," and in order that the nation itself perish not by the terrible cancer that has already made such inroads upon its constitution.

The mission of the Church Anti-Slavery Society is four-fold: First, To establish the positiveness of the *inherent* sinfulness of Slavery—not because its sinfulness is added to or intensified by the qualifying term *inherent*, but because leading divines in our country have asserted the contrary, viz: that Slavery is not sin, itself, not *malum in se*, as a reason for not touching the sin in the church.

Second, To carry into practical operation, as a Christian duty, the principle of non-communion with slave-holders, and disfellowship thereby with the sin of slaveholding.

Third, To vindicate the Christian Scriptures from any warrant or allowance of chattel slavery.

Fourth, To deliver our American Christianity from the stigma that has come upon it as a slaveholding Christianity, by the complicity of American churches with American Slavery.

In furtherance of these objects, the Society has, 1, published and circulated its Declaration of Principles and Constitution, and a sketch of the debates upon their adoption in the Convention at Worcester, on the 1st and 2d of March, 1859, declaring the system of American Slavery and the practice of slaveholding to be essentially sinful and anti-Christian, and to be dealt with, therefore, as such, by Christian churches and ministers; and declaring also the duty of one family or section of the Christian church to rebuke and refuse fellowship to another section of the visible church, that denies the rights of man and the common brotherhood of humanity, by defending Slavery and holding to its bosom slave-sellers, slave-buyers, and slave-holders.

2. It has published also a circular, addressed to the ministry and churches,

setting forth the reasons for this movement, and affirming that we would place the Christian church in its true position—that we would not merely absolve it from all complicity with Slavery, but we would take away its reproach of remaining silent in the presence of the giant crime of the day.

3. It has offered a premium of \$100 for the best tract showing that the Bible gives no warrant or allowance of chattel slavery; to compete for which prize there have been more than fifty M.S.S. from different parts of the land, some of them of great value and ability, and all of them evincing a large amount of thought given to the relation of the Bible and the church to Slavery.

4. It has adopted a Letter Extraordinary to the churches, intended to be read on the Lord's Day amid the solemnities of public worship, which will be widely circulated as soon as the Committee have it in their power to say in that letter, that the salary of their agent is pledged by individuals. The Committee think it would give a great power to the Society at the outset, if they could thus go before the churches with the announcement that, the support of an agency being secured, no part of monies contributed by the benevolent will go to any other purpose, than for the direct uses of the Society in prosecuting its Christian warfare with Slavery. They are therefore anxious to secure at once the required amount of \$1000, that they may forthwith put their agent into the field, that no time may be lost, when American Slavery is defying the moral sense of mankind, by the re-opening of the execrable slave-trade, in the great work of arraying the churches of America against it.

Public meetings of the Church Anti-Slavery Society were held and were very largely attended, in Boston and New York, during the religious anniversaries in May last; and it is in contemplation to hold a series of public meetings at important points in the country during the approaching autumn and winter seasons.

These facts I have thought it proper to communicate, in giving you the salutations of the Church Anti-Slavery Society of the United States. And allow me now to present for your adoption, as a body, the following resolution, which, by your courteous permission, I should argue and urge, (if present with you in Convention,) as expressing what I believe to be the sense of the Church Anti-Slavery Society upon a matter of the very gravest importance:

Resolved, That in the act of the Baptist Church of Zanesville, Ohio, deliberately excommunicating one of its members, Ezekiel S. Cox, Deputy U. S. Marshal, for his part in the capture and rendition to Slavery of a fugitive from bondage, (who had been for three years a resident of Belmont county,) because, in the judgment of said church, in acting as a Deputy Marshal of the United States in this case, he had acted contrary to the spirit and teaching of our holy religion, and to the express command of God himself, as recorded in Deut. 23: 15, 16, and had participated in the Fugitive Slave Case in a manner wholly unwarranted by the Holy Scriptures, and by so doing had grieved his brethren in the church and brought dishonor upon the cause of Christ—in said act of the Zanesville Church we recognize and approve a righteous proceeding; and we see in it, as well as in the Oberlin Rescue Cases, the practical beginning of that conflict which is inevitable between the Christianity and the legislatures of the land in reference to Slavery—a conflict which will be happily terminated by the peaceful triumph of Christianity,

whenever a majority of the churches shall deliberately declare, NO COMMUNION WITH SLAVEHOLDERS AND NO OBEDIENCE TO THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

As the representative of a Society called into being to procure the complete separation of American Christianity from American Slavery, and hoping that it may seem good to the people of the West to form a western division of the Church Anti-Slavery Society, at their present Convention, I remain with Christian cordiality and prayer for the divine blessing upon your deliberations,

HENRY T. CHEEVER,

Sec. of the Church Anti-Slavery Society of the United States,

Jewett City, Connecticut, }
Aug. 5, 1859. }